Postal Cards—Non-mailable Matter.—In *United States* v. *Elliott*, 51 Fed. Rep. 807 (Ky.), the defendant had sent a postal card through the mail giving notice that rent was due and unpaid, and if not paid by a certain date that the "matter would be placed in the hands of an officer." The law claimed to have been violated was the act of September, 1888, which declares as non-mailable any postal card of a "threatening character, or calculated by the terms, manner or style of display, and obviously intended to reflect injuriously upon the character or conduct of another." The United States district judge declared that the act was highly penal and should be strictly construed, but that there was nothing in the language there used, or in the general law which prohibits the use of postal cards for the simple purpose of asking payment of a past-due debt, or of notifying a debtor that if not paid legal steps will be taken for its collection. The language used on the postal card was rather a notification than a threat. This case distinguished from *United States* v. *Brown*, 43 Fed. Rep. 135, where a collecting agency had its cards and envelopes printed in such a way as to make a display to attract attention, and from *United States* v. *Bayle*, 40 Fed. Rep. 664, the reasoning of the court in the latter case not being approved.

Telephone Companies—Common Carriers—Patented Instruments.—In *Delaware and A. Teleg. and Telep. Co.* v. *Delaware*, 50 Fed. Rep. 677, (Delaware) the Circuit Court of Appeals decided that a telephone company was a common carrier, and as such could not discriminate between individuals of classes which it undertook to serve. While the question has not been directly before the U. S. Supreme Court, cases in which it has been so determined have been cited approvingly by that Court, in *Budd* v. *New York*, 143 U. S. 517, 12 Sup. Ct. Rep. 468. In the present case the point was raised that the telephone was protected by patents, and was therefore exempt from the rules which govern common carriers. The court, however, held otherwise and said: "When one engages in such public business it is of no consequence whether the means or instruments whereby it is conducted are patented or not. It is the *business* that is regulated. A patent secures title to the thing patented and its use, just as the law secures title to other descriptions of property. The owner need not apply his property of either description to such public employment, but if he does the employment itself will be subjected to the rules which the law has prescribed for its government without respect to the means or instrument by which it is conducted."